

Exhibit A

-----Original Message-----

From: Carl Schwedler [mailto:cschwedler@mhalaw.com]
Sent: Thursday, November 18, 2004 3:29 PM
To: Randy Skaar
Subject: Battens

Dear Randy,

Please give me a call when you have had a chance to review the prior art below. We need to resolve this quickly.

US Patent No. 5794396

<http://patimg2.uspto.gov/piw?Docid=05794396&homeurl=http%3A%2F%2Fpatft.uspto.gov%2Fnetacgi%2Fnph-Parser%3FSect1%3DPTO2%2526Sect2%3DHITOFF%2526u%3D%2Fnetahml%2Fsearch-adv.htm%2526r%3D1%2526p%3D1%2526f%3DG%2526l%3D50%2526d%3Dpxt%2526S1%3D5794396.WKU.%2526OS%3Dpn%2F5794396%2526RS%3DPN%2F5794396&PageNum=&Rtype=&SectionNum=&idkey=4087330D1E18>

US Patent No. 5617690

<http://patimg2.uspto.gov/piw?Docid=05617690&homeurl=http%3A%2F%2Fpatft.uspto.gov%2Fnetacgi%2Fnph-Parser%3FSect2%3DPTO1%2526Sect2%3DHITOFF%2526u%3D1%2526u%3D%25252Fnetahml%25252Fsearch-bool.html%2526r%3D1%2526f%3DG%2526l%3D50%2526d%3DPALL%2526S1%3D5617690.WKU.%2526OS%3DPN%2F5617690%2526RS%3DPN%2F5617690&PageNum=&Rtype=&SectionNum=&idkey=9FA15289F30A>

US Patent No. 5471807

<http://patimg1.uspto.gov/piw?Docid=05471807&homeurl=http%3A%2F%2Fpatft.uspto.gov%2Fnetacgi%2Fnph-Parser%3FSect1%3DPTO2%2526Sect2%3DHITOFF%2526u%3D%2Fnetahml%2Fsearch-adv.htm%2526r%3D1%2526p%3D1%2526f%3DG%2526l%3D50%2526d%3Dpxt%2526S1%3D5471807.WKU.%2526OS%3Dpn%2F5471807%2526RS%3DPN%2F5471807&PageNum=&Rtype=&SectionNum=&idkey=2DB1A495020E>

US Patent No. 4418505

<http://patimg1.uspto.gov/piw?Docid=04418505&homeurl=http%3A%2F%2Fpatft.uspto.gov%2Fnetacgi%2Fnph-Parser%3FSect1%3DPTO2%2526Sect2%3DHITOFF%2526u%3D%2Fnetahml%2Fsearch-adv.htm%2526r%3D1%2526p%3D1%2526f%3DG%2526l%3D50%2526d%3Dpxt%2526S1%3D4418505.WKU.%2526OS%3Dpn%2F4418505%2526RS%3DPN%2F4418505&PageNum=&Rtype=&SectionNum=&idkey=10000000000000000000000000000000>

3D4418505.WKU.%2526OS%3Dpn%2F4418505%2526RS%3DPN%
2F4418505&PageNum=&Rtype=&SectionNum=&Idkey=2F3AFB6A9FC2

DE 44 21 941 A1

[http://i2.espacenet.com/espacenet/bnsviewer?
CY=gb&LG=en&DB=EPD&PN=DE4421941&ID=DE+++4421941A1+i+](http://i2.espacenet.com/espacenet/bnsviewer?CY=gb&LG=en&DB=EPD&PN=DE4421941&ID=DE+++4421941A1+i+)

GB 20 62 056

[http://i2.espacenet.com/espacenet/bnsviewer?
CY=gb&LG=en&DB=EPD&PN=GB2062056&ID=GB+++2062056A++i+](http://i2.espacenet.com/espacenet/bnsviewer?CY=gb&LG=en&DB=EPD&PN=GB2062056&ID=GB+++2062056A++i+)

Best regards,

Carl

Carl J. Schwedler*
McDonough Holland & Allen
Phone: (916) 444-3900
Fax: (916) 325-4587
Web: <http://www.mhalaw.com/>

* Registered in Wisconsin only and registered Patent Attorney

Confidentiality Notice: This communication and any accompanying document(s) are confidential and privileged. They are intended for the sole use of the addressee. If you receive this transmission in error, you are advised that any disclosure, copying, distribution, or the taking of any action in reliance upon the communication is strictly prohibited. Moreover, any such inadvertent disclosure shall not compromise or waive the attorney-client privilege as to this communication. If you have received this communication in error, please contact our IT Department by email at helpdesk@mhalaw.com, or by telephone at (916) 444-3900. Thank you.